

Message Text

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ACTION NEA-07

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NSCE-00 INR-05 CIAE-00 DODE-00 EB-03 OMB-01
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R 150845Z MAY 77
FM AMEMBASSY ALGIERS
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 6438

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 1 OF 3 ALGIERS 1195

LIMDIS

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: PFOR, US, AG
SUBJECT: CLARK CLIFFORD MEETS WITH BOUMEDIENE AND BOUTEFLIKA

1. BEGIN SUMMARY: CLARK CLIFFORD, ON PRIVATE PERSONAL VISIT TO ALGIERS TO MEET WITH SONATRACH OFFICIALS, MET WITH BOUTEFLIKA MAY 11 AND BOUMEDIENE MAY 12 AT THEIR REQUESTS. DISCUSSIONS FOCUSED ON AMERICAN-ALGERIAN RELATIONS, BUT ALSO COVERED MIDDLE EAST, POSSIBLE BOUMEDIENE VISIT TO US, AND OTHER ISSUES. CLIFFORD REVIEWED DISCUSSIONS WITH CHARGE 12 MAY AND COMMENTED THAT HE HAD FOUND SUBSTANTIAL CHANGE OF ATTITUDE AMONG ALGERIANS, THAT THEY HAD OVERCOME THEIR DEFENSIVENESS OF THE PAST, AND THAT THEY WERE CONFIDENT AND READY FOR IMPROVEMENT AND EXPANSION IN OUR RELATIONS. END SUMMARY.

2. FOLLOWING IS SUMMARY OF DISCUSSIONS CLARK CLIFFORD HAD WITH PRESIDENT BOUMEDIENE 12 MAY AND FOREIGN MINISTER BOUTEFLIKA 11 MAY AS CLIFFORD DESCRIBED THEM TO CHARGE. CLIFFORD STRESSED TO BOTH THAT HIS COMMENTS WERE STRICTLY PERSONAL ONES. HE IS FIRST AMERICAN TO HAVE MET WITH BOUTEFLIKA IN ALGIERS SINCE KISSINGER. CLIFFORD ALSO MET WITH MINISTRY OF ENERGY AND PETROCHEMICALS GHOZALI AND AMBASSADOR-DESIGNATE TO US MAOUL.

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3. DISCUSSION WITH BOUTEFLIKA: CLIFFORD GAVE ONLY GENERAL RUNDOWN ON HIS HOUR AND FORTY MINUTES WITH BOUTEFLIKA; HE DESCRIBED HIS TALK AS LENGTHY, FRIENDLY, GENERAL, WIDESPREAD DISCUSSION OF PAST RELATIONS AND HOPES FOR FUTURE.

4. ALGERIA-US: BOUTEFLIKA BEGAN SESSION WITH LENGTHY COMMENTARY STRESSING OPPORTUNITIES THAT NOW EXIST FOR BETTER RELATIONS BETWEEN US AND ALGERIA. BOUTEFLIKA NOTED INCREASING ECONOMIC EXCHANGES BETWEEN THE TWO COUNTRIES, CITING AS EXAMPLES THAT US IS ALREADY MAJOR PURCHASER OF ALGERIAN OIL AND THAT ONCE ALGERIAN GAS GOES ON LINE US WILL BECOME EVEN MORE IMPORTANT CUSTOMER. HE ANTICIPATED RELATIONS BECOMING CLOSER AND EXPANDING.

5. CLIFFORD RESPONDED THAT FOR PAST SEVEN YEARS HE HAS BEEN WORKING TO EXPLAIN ALGERIA IN US IN ORDER TO IMPROVE ALGERIAN IMAGE. CLIFFORD STRESSED THAT IT WAS IMPORTANT THAT ALGERIANS GET A NEW AMBASSADOR IN WASHINGTON SOON, NOTING THAT OTHER NATIONS WITH WHICH ALGERIA IS IN COMPETITION HAVE HAD AMBASSADORS THERE AND HAVE BEEN BETTER ABLE TO PLEAD THEIR CASE.

6. BOUTEFLIKA RESPONDED THAT ALGERIA'S NEW AMBASSADOR TO US, MAOUI, HAS HAD LONG AND CLOSE RELATIONSHIP WITH BOUMEDIENE, KNOWS ALGERIAN GOVERNMENT AND ALGERIAN ATTITUDES, IS LEARNING ENGLISH, AND IS GOOD MAN WHO WILL REPRESENT ALGERIA WELL.

7. IN RESPONSE TO QUESTIONS FROM BOUTEFLIKA ABOUT PRESIDENT CARTER CLIFFORD DESCRIBED PRESIDENT'S CAREER AND HAD HIGHLY-FAVORABLE IMPRESSIONS OF PRESIDENT. CLIFFORD PARTICULARLY STRESSED PRESIDENT'S COMMITMENT TO HUMAN RIGHTS. MANY POLICIES HAVE CHANGED, HE SAID, AND WE ARE NOW ASKING MANY ETHICAL AND MORAL QUESTIONS. CONFIDENTIAL

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CLIFFORD NOTED SPECIFICALLY THAT ALGERIA WAS ENGAGED IN KIND OF NATION-BUILDING THAT PRESIDENT CARTER WOULD BE INTERESTED IN. CLIFFORD NOTED FIT BETWEEN ALGERIA AND US, ESPECIALLY IN ECONOMIC DOMAIN WITH RESPECT TO ALGERIAN OIL AND GAS, AND STATED HE WAS SURE THAT US WILL BUY ALL OF GAS WE HAVE CONTRACTED FOR; HE DREW BOUTEFLIKA'S ATTENTION TO PRESIDENT'S HAVING REMOVED LIMIT OF IMPORTATION OF NATURAL GAS FROM ANY ONE COUNTRY. CLIFFORD ALSO NOTED THAT HE WAS OPTIMISTIC THAT FPC WOULD MOVE MORE QUICKLY THAN IT HAS IN PAST ON ALGERIAN GAS CONTRACTS.

8. BOUTEFLIKA CONCLUDED DISCUSSION NOTING THAT CLIFFORD AND ALGERIA HAD HAD LONG RELATIONSHIP, BUT THAT HE, BOUTEFLIKA, HAD NOT PARTICIPATED IN IT. IN FUTURE, BOUTEFLIKA SAID, HE WOULD ENSURE THAT RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN CLIFFORD AND BOUTEFLIKA CONTINUED.

9. DISCUSSION WITH BOUMEDIENE: CLIFFORD NOTED THAT HIS TWO HOUR TEN MINUTE DISCUSSION WITH BOUMEDIENE

BEGAN WITH TWO MINUTES OF PLEASANTRIES AND MOVED DIRECTLY TO SUBSTANCE WITH BOUMEDIENE ASKING CLIFFORD WHAT HE WISHED TO DISCUSS. CLIFFORD SAID THAT AT BEGINNING OF MEETING BOUMEDIENE WAS SLIGHTLY RESERVDD AND SPEAKING IN FRENCH; AFTER SHORT PERIOD NEW INTERPRETER CAME IN, BOUMEDIENE SPOKE IN ARABIC, AND HIS RESERVE GRADUALLY DISSOLVED DURING MEETING.

10. CLIFFORD BEGAN SESSION STRESSING THAT OPPORTUNITY NOW EXISTED FOR ALGERIA AND US TO GET TOGETHER. HE DESCRIBED PRESIDENT CARTER'S PERSONALITY, CHARACTER, AND RISE TO POWER AT LENGTH; CLIFFORD'S DESCRIPTION EVOKED COMMENT FROM BOUMEDIENE THAT "I WILL LIKE HIM BECAUSE HE IS A PEASANT LIKE ME". BOUMEDIENE DEMONSTRATED GREAT INTEREST, AS A PRACTICAL POLITICIAN, IN MECHANICS OF PRESIDENT'S SUCCESSFUL DRIVE FOR PRESIDENCY.

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11. CLIFFORD STRESSED NECESSITY FOR ALGERIA TO HAVE COMPETENT AMBASSADOR IN US SOON. BOUMEDIENE RESPONDED THAT MAOUI IS "CONFIDANT" OF HIS, THAT HE KNOWS ALGERIAN POLICY AND ATTITUDES, AND THAT HE WAS CONFIDENT MAOUI WOULD REPRESENT ALGERIA WELL.

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FM AMEMBASSY ALGIERS
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 6439

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 2 OF 3 ALGIERS 1195

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12. MIDDLE EAST: CLIFFORD THEN RAISED MIDDLE EAST, RECALLING

THAT ON MAY 9 HE HAD SPOKEN AT LENGTH WITH PRESIDENT CARTER ABOUT PRESIDENT'S GENEVA MEETINGS. CLIFFORD REPORTED THAT THERE IS NOW DIFFERENT ATTITUDE ON MIDDLE EAST IN WASHINGTON. CLIFFORD STRESSED THAT PRESIDENT CARTER WAS DETERMINED TO DO ALL IN HIS POWER TO ACHIEVE PEACE IN MIDDLE EAST. IN HIS FIRST 100 DAYS HE HAD ESTABLISHED EXCELLENT RELATIONS WITH SADAT AND HUSSEIN. PRESIDENT CARTER HAD BEEN MUCH IMPRESSED BY ASAD AND FELT HE COULD TALK WITH HIM. CLIFFORD STRESSED THAT UNQUESTIONABLY PRESIDENT CARTER BELIEVED ONE OF HIS MAIN GOALS TO BE TO HELP FIND SOLUTION TO PALESTINIAN QUESTION. CARTER, CLIFFORD SAID, RECOGNIZED THAT WE HAD TO TALK ABOUT PALESTINIANS AND THAT WE HAD TO FIND PLACE WHERE PALESTINIANS CAN LIVE IN DIGNITY AND HOPE FOR FUTURE.

13. BOUMEDIENE RESPONDED WITH ELOQUENCE AND AT LENGTH. HE SAID THAT HE WAS AWARE OF PRESIDENT CARTER'S STATEMENT ON PALESTINIANS AND APPRECIATED ADMINISTRATION'S TATEMENT OF CONCERN ABOUT HITERTO IGNORED ISSUES. HE APPROVED PRESIDENT'S EMPHASIS ON HUMAN RIGHTS ISSUES. ON MIDDLE EAST ISSUES, BOUMEDIENE DEVELOPED AT LENGTH STANDARD ALGERIAN THEME THAT

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IF SADAT, ASAD AND THE PLO CAN AGREE ON THE BASIS FOR SETTLEMENT ALGERIANS WOULD POSE NO PROBLEMS. CLIFFORD ASKED WHY BOUMEDIENE HAS OMITTED JORDAN. BOUMEDIENE RESPONDED WITH FOUR-MINUTE DISCUSSION, ESSENCE OF WHICH WAS THAT WHATEVER SADAT, ASAD AND THE PLO DECIDED JORDAN WOULD HAVE TO GO ALONG WITH.

14. IN RESPONSE TO CLIFFORD'S COMMENT THAT CUBA AND ALGERIA HAD BEEN FRIENDS AND THAT ONE OF THE RESULTS OF THIS FRIENDSHIP WAS THAT THOSE IN US WHO OPPOSED CUBA HAD BEEN AGAINST ALGERIA, BOUMEDIENE RESPONDED THAT ALGERIA WAS GOOD FRIEND OF CUBA AND THAT FOR LONG TIME ALGERIA HAS ENDURED VERY TRYING POSITION. AS FAR AS US IS CONCERNED, HE SAID, THERE HAVE BEEN GOOD ARABS AND BAD ARABS; ORIGINALLY THERE WERE ONLY A FEW GOOD ARABS; RECENTLY THIS PERCENTAGE SEEMED TO HAVE CHANGED. US SHOULD GET OVER THIS INTERPRETATION, BOUMEDIENE SAID, FOR THERE IS NO REASON WHY THE US CANNOT BE FRIENDS WITH ALL ARBAS; WE SHOULD GET OVER OUR GOOD-ARAB AND BAD-ARAB COMPLEX.

15. LIBYA: CLIFFORD RAISED QUESTION OF LIBYA, EXPLAINING OUR CONCERN ABOUT SOME ACTIVITIES OF QADHAFI. BOUMEDINE HASTENED TO QADHAFI'S DEFENSE, EXPLAINING THAT US DID NOT UNDERSTAND QADHAIF AND THAT HE HAS TALKED WITH QADHAFI AND BELIEVES HIM TO BE SERIOUS, RESPONSIBLE LEADER.

16. SOVIET UNION: CLIFFORD EXPLAINED US EFFORTS TO REACH UNDERSTANDING WITH THE SOVIET UNION AND DESCRIBED HOW WE WERE EXPANDING CONTACTS. HE ASKED IF BOUMEDIENE BELIEVED THERE WERE ANY DIFFICULTIES IN ALGERIA OR IN MIDDLE EAST AT PRESENT TIME BECAUSE OF SOVIET ACTIVITIES. BOUMEDIENE SAID VERY LITTLE IN RESPONSE, NOTING THAT HE SAW NO DIFFICULTIES IN SOVIET ACTIVITIES AND THAT IT WAS STILL QUESTION OF TWO SUPER-POWERS AND POWER-BASED RELATIONSHIPS. BOUMEDIENE NOTED THAT ALGERIA HAS CLOSE RELATIONS WITH

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THE SOVIETS IN MAY FIELDS, FOR EXAMPLE, OBTAINING "ALL OUR ARMS" FROM SOVIETS. BOUMEDIENE SAID THAT DEALING WITH SOVIET UNION IS MORE DIFFICULT THAN DEALING WITH THE US AND LESS SATISFACTORY, AND THAT ALGERIA PREFERRED SIGNING CONTRACTS WITH US AND US FIRMS. HE STATED THAT ALGERIA HAD SIGNED TECHNICAL AND SCIENTIFIC ACCORDS WITH SOVIET UNION BUT THAT ACCORDS WERE NOT IN SAME CLASS AS AGREEMENTS WITH US. BOUMEDIENE EXPLAINED THAT "WE TURN TO US BECAUSE THAT IS WHERE THE GENIUS IS".

17. AFRICA: CLIFFORD ASKED IF BOUMEDIENE HAD ANYTHING HE WISHED TO SAY ABOUT AFRICA. BOUMEDIENE RESPONDED BRIEFLY AND PHILOSOPHICALLY, SAYING THAT HE RECOGNIZED THAT CUBAN ACTIVITIES HAVE EXACERBATED US-CUBAN RELATIONS. HE SAID THAT THERE IS FERMENT IN REGION, THAT NEWLY-EMERGING NATIONS GO THROUGH SEVERAL STAGES, AND THAT HE THOUGHT THINGS WOULD SORT THEMSELVES OUT.

18. BOUMEDIENE VISIT TO US: CLIFFORD NOTED THAT HE WOULD BE TRYING TO HELP ALGERIA IN US THROUGH HIS BUSINESS AND GOVERNMENTAL CONTACTS AND HE HOPED NEW ALGERIAN AMBASSADOR WOULD BE ABLE TO PRESENT ALGERIA'S CASE. CLIFFORD STATED, HOWEVER, THAT HE BELIEVED THAT GENUINE RELATIONSHIP NEEDED CONTACT AT HIGHEST LEVELS.

19. IN THIS CONNECTION, CLIFFORD SAID HE HOPED BOUMEDIENE WOULD GIVE CAREFUL CONSIDERATION TO COMING TO US FOR FULL DIPLOMATIC VISIT SO HE AND CARTER COULD TALK OUT MATTERS OF MUTUAL CONCERN. CLIFFORD ENVISAGED DISCUSSIONS INVOLVING ENERGY, ECONOMIC RELATIONS, FUTURE OF MEDITERRANEAN AND NORTH AFRICA. "HOW ALGERIA IS EMERGING AS A PRINCIPAL NATION IN THE WESTERN NORTH AFRICA," AND NATION-BUILDING PROCESS IN ALGERIA.

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FM AMEMBASSY ALGIERS
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 6440

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 3 OF 3 ALGIERS 1195

LIMDIS

20. CLIFFORD NOTED THAT BOUMEDIENE'S EYES "SPARKLED" AND "DANCED" WHEN CLIFFORD RAISED THIS, AND HE RESPONDED THAT SUCH VISIT WOULD BE "EXCEEDINGLY IMPORTANT". BOUMEDIENE ASKED ABOUT TIMING. CLIFFORD RESPONDED THAT HE KNEW PRESIDENT CARTER'S SCHEDULE FOR 1977 WAS FULL AND THAT PLANNING SHOULD BEGIN NOW FOR VISIT IN 1978. CLIFFORD NOTED THAT THIS WAS SOMETHING THAT HE AND NEW ALGERIAN AMBASSADOR COULD DISCUSS. BOUMEDIENE WAS ENTHUSIASTIC, NOTING THAT IN ADDITION TO VISIT WITH PRESIDENT CARTER, "I WOULD LIKE TO KNOW AMERICA BETTER". CLIFFORD OUTLINED TRIP INVOLVING STOP IN WASHINGTON FOR TOP-LEVEL DISCUSSIONS, NEW YORK, DETROIT, AGRICULTURAL AREA SUCH AS DES MOINES, IOWA, OR LINCOLN, NEBRASKA, PETROCHEMICAL AND PETROLEUM CENTERS, SAN FRANCISCO, AND NEW ORLEANS. CLIFFORD SAID IT WOULD BE IMPORTANT FOR PRESIDENT BOUMEDIENE TO GET IMPRESSION OF VARIETY OF US.

21. COMMENT: CLIFFORD SAID THAT UPON HIS RETURN TO WASHINGTON HE WOULD DISCUSS HIS TRIP WITH WEISLOGEL AND JAMESON AND ALSO REPORT TO THE PRESIDENT AND THE SECRETARY.LYNE

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